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## WRITTEN SPECIFICATIONS FOR HIRING

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The essential function and purpose of written specifications for hiring is to define and describe man and job and their mutual relation, so as to afford a working basis of common agreement and understanding among the directly interested personnel of the organization.

Written specifications for hiring are largely a product and result of modern scientific management. The spirit and program of this form of management is best evidenced by the writings and practical work of Emerson, Taylor, Gilbreth, etc. In substance their aim and ideal is to standardize, functionalize and generally organize plant, equipment, personnel, etc., to best practicable advantage. Mr. Harrington Emerson defines efficiency as the right thing, done in the right manner, by the right man, at the right place and in the right time. It is quite manifest that Mr. Emerson has built his whole definition around and on the personal element. The right thing, the right manner, the right place, the right time are "right" by virtue of being predetermined, recorded standards and it logically follows, therefore, that the "right man" must be so by accepted definition and description.

In purchasing materials a certain quantity and quality is secured for a certain price and the material is usually bought because best adapted for its particular, intended use. Specifications are drawn up giving exact kind, sizes, dimensions, etc., as required by intended use and for given money.

In purchasing labor, does not the same relation between commodity, service, and price hold true? Labor should be purchased solely because the individual man has attributes, qualities and degree of fitness that make him an efficient selection for the particular job at an economical price.

The employer, whose motive for being in business is generally to make a profit, does not want to pay for any more or less ability than he can use, and as a good business man should not. His

specific work calls for certain essential qualifications and he wants the best that the market affords at a price. Therefore the value from the business man's point of view of having written specifications which outline what the job is and is not, and describe what the individual should be and need not be, is obvious. If these specifications were scientifically drawn up and followed closely and intelligently in the selection of help the result would be to fit the right man in the right job at the right price. This would then seem to be a fundamental method and remedy to reduce the labor turnover. Also, of assuring to the employer that he is getting and paying for his labor on a basis of set service and performance, and if, as a result of such happy selection, each man found more joy in his work and pride in its performance, it would be a large step toward industrial idealism.

It is desirable that the specifications be written by one person, who should have good power of synthesis and analysis, a philosophic, judicial mind, and of course the literary ability to give in so many words an accurate, reliable and adequate description and definition.

If the plant or organization to be dealt with in this way has not already an organization chart or tree one should first be drawn up. This should show the structure of the business by divisions, sections and departments and list the special classes and kinds of work within each so that a title may be given each operation or "job" for which somebody is usually hired. As, "power press hands," or, if it is thought advisable to attempt a finer and more elaborate division,—power press A, power press B, etc.

Following is a representative list of such titles used to cover all jobs in one of the press departments of a large metal ware business:

- 1 Foreman.
- 1 Solderer.
- 1 Die setter.
- 2 Power press "A."
- 3 Power press "B."
- 1 Power press "C."
- 2 Bench hands.
- 3 Foot press hands.

When the various jobs have been classified by title or designation in each department and the one who is to write the specifica-

tions has obtained at least a fair acquaintance with the general nature, organization and aspects of the business the following method of attack is suggested.

First, select some particular department and after ascertaining from competent authority its general kind of work and relation to the other departments, spend some time watching the employes at work, observe their motions, efforts, habits, system. *What they do and how they do it.* Talk with several employes and get their idea and description of their respective jobs, as well as of the department as a whole. It is also a good plan to get the opinions and ideas of persons not directly engaged in any work in that department but who in the course of business come more or less in contact with some phase of its activities.

Note the physical surroundings and general conditions. Make copious notes.

The next step is to analyze the various jobs from the point of what they do and *why* they do it. Then having satisfied ourselves of what is necessary and essential, a rough definition may be drawn. This should cover in general a description of the particular job and what would seem to be required by way of specific person to fill the job,—the physical, intellectual and character essentials. When completed this should be submitted for the opinion of those engaged, directly or indirectly, in the work. More often than not several changes will be found necessary because *reading* the description as a whole, often points out misstatements and inadequacies to the man in the shop whose mind is not always organized to fully and exactly express himself in conversation.

It is a chief consideration to be well borne in mind that each specification, before being adopted, should have as full and sincere *understanding* and *approval* of those who are to have authority over the person described, as can be had by a practical accommodation of the various ideas and opinions into one single definition. This allows for all the advantages that accrue from a spirit of common council and makes for the successful use of the specifications.

It is also a good plan to make express statement of what the employe need not be so as to check, if possible, the petty notions and prejudices of some and make clear the intentions of the management. This would cover politics, religion, race, nationality, etc.

To those interested in work of this kind, I would suggest that they read Dr. Blackford's book, *The Job, The Man, The Boss*, and especially Hugo Munsterburg's *Psychology and Industrial Efficiency*. The point of view of both is interesting and should be of considerable help to anyone engaged in the writing of specifications for hiring.

Following are a few sample specifications of a foreman, a press hand, and a factory planner, respectively.

*Foreman*

Department X—Section X

Ideal: all Foremen

Dependable, willing competent man who can strike best practicable adjustment between the factors of maximum production, minimum time, most efficient motion, least effort, best quality and promote "Spirit of the Hive" by reciprocity, coöperation and mutuality.

*Storekeeper* Department 233

Department X—Section X

Storekeeper: Ideal, See Department No. 15, "Foreman"

Has charge and immediate supervision of all raw stock used in works. He receives same from cars and disposes of it as requisitioned. A practical familiarity with tin plate, sheet and band iron, wire, rivets, etc., is, therefore, essential, that he may be able to measure, guage and identify general quality and grade of same. He must be intelligent enough to read and write, understand and appreciate the purpose and function of such clerical forms as requisitions, manifests, etc., used in shipment of ware from plate mill to machine he delivers same to, and have a good command of the ordinary arithmetic operations, reading and writing. He should have a good visual memory, a regard for the systematic arrangement and efficient location of his material, and a close knowledge of same.

As a foreman he must be able to direct and "get the work out of" a gang of common, ordinary laborers. To some extent he must have the gruff personality to command the respect, get the enthusiasm and confidence of men of this class, and type. He should be patient and even-tempered enough to be constantly "bothered" for material and readjustment, etc., and yet ready to

serve the production end at every opportunity; must speak English, and Polish, if possible; must have absolute integrity and honesty.

*Power Press "A"*

Department X

Power Press "A":

Should have had experience on small press and bench machines or work similar—to acquire knack, carefulness and speed rather than any special skill. Physically such operatives should have considerable endurance and stamina for the work is in itself machine-like, and 90 per cent of it is done on the feet. Height about 5 feet 2 inches to 5 feet 5 inches, with weight proportionate—sturdy physique and from 17 to 19 years of age. Good muscular coördination and of such order of intelligence as is satisfied and inclined to reduce its work to terms of continuous, single-grooved habit.

As a natural corollary it is obvious, therefore, that an over-responsive, overkeyed, nervous organization would be dangerous, on account of accidents, and would also make the work disagreeable, and hence, not a "good job" from employe's standpoint. To make for a permanent force, other things being equal, it is very essential that the intelligence be not overactive or imaginative, and that the employe be such as would consider himself acquiring nothing beyond his expected stipend and the knowledge of running that kind of machine.

As a general proposition he must be plastic enough to fit into the spirit as required above by definition of a foreman and, therefore, not "fresh or a smart Aleck."

*Factory Planner*

Department X

Factory Planner:

Might be defined as a factory clerk, experienced and familiar with the general ware, its special kinds, sizes and classification by item and having an appreciation of the general process and sequence of manufacture, seasonal variations, shop practicalities, sufficient to program a miscellaneous volume of work with most efficient net result. He must be able to tactfully obtain, organize and put into effective motion the active coöperation of each foreman and therefore, have adequate, reliable and immediate knowl-

edge, records and aides (as an order and progress clerk), so that he can further and, possibly, check the quality and extent of the foreman's coöperation. The progress file and schedule-of-work record run by the planner on orders pending, in process and available is in large measure arranged and built on the accepted promises of the foremen in consultation with the planner, and is adapted as closely as circumstances permit to the demands of the general storekeeper, hence, good power of analysis and synthesis, ability to form a safe average judgment, tactful persistence and a retentive memory are essential qualifications of the planner.

The ideal planner would have a thorough appreciation of the full possibilities of men (*i.e.*, labor); equipment (machines); supervisory forces and responsibility and be able to strike the best practicable adjustment between the desired volume of production, various elements of time, promises given and accepted, departmental and factory coördination, and obtain maximum production and quality in minimum time and cost, with least effort and waste to the various factors of production.

As an organization the planning office might be likened to a clearing house and in its most undeveloped state as simply a place of clerical record, for immediate and reliable reference of the superintendent, of orders pending, in process and available, and a place where the respective foremen obtain their data. Logically, the chief planner should develop and evolve from the organization.